

REMARKS

In the Office Action, the claims were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being informal. It is noted that no specific comments were made concerning claims 32-36 and these have been retained.

Claim 37 has been drafted to clearly and patentably distinguish from the known prior art. At best, the prior art shows possibly a carrier bulletin board (similar but not the same as an auction) and a shipper bulletin board (similar but not the same as a reverse auction) accessible through the same computer system. Generally speaking, these bulletin boards must be accessed to obtain information in the prior art. The present invention is the first to generate reports of bids or invitations to bid that have been analyzed and measured against one or more criteria and the automatically sent to the interested party without the interested party having to initiate the communication with the system.

Claim 38 recites that the report, more specifically described in the description as a "Best 7" report can be generated for both sellers and buyers, which is a further unique and nonobvious feature of the present invention (see specification, page 17, page 25, and page 33, last paragraph.)

Claim 43 more particularly claims the "Best 7" reports.

Other claims that recite significant features of the invention are claims include claim 45, which recites a master bulletin board of all data on the computer system which further comprises publicly accessible shipper bulletin boards and publicly accessible carrier bulletin boards and private access networks that have limited access. This is disclosed at page 6-8 and pages 30-33 of the specification and would include a database for handling multiple screen displays such as illustrated in Figs. 6 and 7.

Claims 48 and 49 allow either anonymous or non-anonymous operation of the system.

Claims 56-59 concern the specific qualifications and profile data that is entered and analyzed by elements, 15, 16

and 17 of the computer system 10. These criteria are illustrated in Figs. 3a, 3b, 9 and 10a-10e.

Claims 39, 40, 41, 46 and 41, 50 and 51 add details of operation that are limited in comparison with the overall scope of the system, but are nevertheless deemed novel and not suggested by the cited art.

Claims 53, 54, and 55 recite the modes of communication which can be utilized by the system.

Claim 60 provides for customization of the bulletin boards by the users which is not seen in the prior art.

Claim 61 relates to displaying multiple bulletin boards at one time in the computer system rather than one at a time as shown in the references. This is disclosed at the middle of page 26 and 30-33.

Claim 62 relates to private access networks which are disclosed at pages 6-8 of the specification and in original claim 9.

Claim 63 is now directed to the subject matter of cancelled claims 9 and 28.

Claims 64-66 claims elements of the central processing system including elements for storing the specific qualifications and profile data that is entered and analyzed by elements, 15, 16 and 17 of the computer system 10. These criteria are illustrated in Figs. 3a, 3b, 9 and 10a-10e. These claims also includes elements in parallel with the method elements in claim 1.

Based on the amendment and remarks, reconsideration of the claims is respectfully requested. Claims 32-66 are now pending and an indication of allowance is earnestly solicited.

It is noted that the Examiner provided an International Preliminary Examination Report found that claims 1-36 provided an inventive step because the prior art does not teach or fairly suggest electronically receiving from the shipper one of the bids contained in a bid report and means for electronically transmitting to the shipper a bid report with bids received from some of the carriers receiving the

invitation to bid. It also does not suggest generating such a bid report based on a criterion stored in the computer. It is believed that the current claims reflect this distinction over the known prior art.

CONCLUSION

In view of the Amendment and Remarks, reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested. After the Amendment, claims 32-66 are still pending, and a Notice of Allowance for these claims is earnestly solicited. No fee is believed to be due for the new claims, however, in the event any fee or credit is deemed to be due, authorization is hereby granted to charge Quarles & Brady Deposit Acct. 17-0055.

Respectfully submitted,

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